

Research Paper: Topic Selection

- I. In notes, for each source in the packet, write the following. This is for your use, not for grading.

What is the main topic/subject of the source?

What are two important quotations?

What information do you know or do you have available about the author's background, the context of the source, or reason why the source was written?

What are other possible points of view about the source?

- II. Once you decide on a source to read, remember how to ask questions from the information to see if you can work out arguments in and about it.

STASIS

According to Frank D'Angelo, "a stasis is the 1st conflict of two sides of a case [in our case, an argument] resulting from the rejection of an acquisition." In his book, *Composition in the Classical Tradition*, he links stasis as being closely related to the invention aspect of the writing process. "The Romans called it status or constitutio," and in Roman times, it was primarily defined as a legal argument; although, in earlier Grecian times, it was used "as a political term in Thucydides, it meant 'strife,' 'conflict,' 'faction,' and even 'civil war.'" (D'Angelo, 8). D'Angelo defines stasis as "the main point in a legal argument," which can take one of four forms:

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| 1 Conjectural | Is it a dispute over a fact? (Did something happen?) |
| 2 Definitional | Is it a dispute over a definition? (Allowing that something did happen, what was it?) |
| 3 Qualitative | Is it a dispute over the value, quality, or nature of an act? (Acknowledging that both something happened and that it was a particular thing, what kind of a thing was it?) |
| 4 Translative | Is it a dispute over moving the issue from one court or jurisdiction to another? (To whom is the defendant accountable?) (D'Angelo, 115) |

In modern terms stasis is commonly referred to as a balance between two or more forces within an argument. Corbett and Eberly refer to stasis, at least initially, simply as question, or more to the point, five forms of a question regarding any particular issue:

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|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1 Questions of conjecture | What happened? Does a shared reality exist? |
| 2 Questions of definition | What should we call it? |
| 3 Questions of cause or consequence | How did this come to happen? What will follow from it? |
| 4 Questions of value | Is this good or bad? Is this functional? Is this just? |

- 5 Questions of procedure What should we do about this? (Corbett and Rosa, 17)
or proposal

Works Cited

Corbett, Edward. P. J., and Rosa A. Eberly. *The Elements of Reasoning*. 2nd ed., Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon, 2000.

D'Angelo, Frank J. *Composition in the Classical Tradition*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon, 2000.

III. You will use the source you select as the basis for creating a synthesis question.

To keep in mind:

You must have between 5 – 7 sources.

You must include 2 pieces of visual rhetoric.

You will develop a question and then develop a research paper based on this question.

Here are the synthesis prompts that have been on the AP Exam (or practice exams) from 2007-2011:

Develop a position on the effects of advertising.

Take a position that defends, challenges, or qualifies the claim that television has had a positive impact on presidential elections.

Evaluate what a business or government agency would need to consider before transferring a hardy but nonindigenous species to another country.

Develop a position on the most important considerations facing the person responsible for securing a new work of art or an artifact for a museum.

Develop a position on whether or not there should be specific texts that all students of high school English must read.

Develop a position on whether or not the penny coin should be eliminated.

Use this issue to argue the extent to which schools should support individuality or conformity.

Develop a position about what issues should be considered most important in making decisions about space exploration.

Evaluate daylight saving time and offer a recommendation about its continued use.

Evaluate the most important factors that a school should consider before using particular technologies in curriculum and instruction.

Develop a position on the extent to which government should be responsible for fostering green practices.

Identify the key issues associated with the locavore movement and examine their implications for the community.